00509

1970/05/06

Classification

Department of State TELEGRAM

INDICATE:
☐ COLLECT
☐ CHARGE TO

DISTRIBUTION

ACTION: Amembassy PHNOM PENH PRIORITY

INFO: Amembassy SAIGON
CINCPAC

NODIS
STATE EM 068509

SUBJECT: Extension of/MARKET TIME operations to Cambodian waters

REF: Phnom Penh 759

1. In connection with our operations against the VC/NVA occupied border areas of Cambodia, it seems to us that there would be advantage to both ourselves and GOC in some extension of/MARKET TIME operations into Cambodian waters so as to reduce the ability of the VC/NVA forces to obtain re-supply from the sea. FYI MARKET TIME/is an operation employing both USN and VNA assets to counter sea infiltration into SVN. It is conducted in the internal and territorial seas of the SVN under principles of international law permitting a state to enforce its customs, fiscal, sanitary and immigration laws. Vessels violating those laws can be apprehended with the use of minimum

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S/S Mr. Eliot
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~~XXXXXXX~~force necessary, which includes destruction if required. Thus far these operations have strictly sought to observe the territorial waters of Cambodia and no enforcement has been sought with regard to vessels entering those waters. End FYI

2. Our intelligence indicates that there are now considerable VC/NVA activities along the Cambodian coastline, including the movement of supplies by sampans and junks, and that attacks have been carried out against the coastline community of Kep. We would also assume that with destruction of supplies in sanctuary areas and difficulty of using Ho Chi Minh Trail during rainy season, NVA will make strenuous efforts to re-supply forces by sea. In order to relate the operation both in fact and in theory to the cross border operations now being conducted against the sanctuaries, we would propose to extend/~~XXXXXXXXXXX~~MARKET TIME operations only up to 104 degrees east just beyond the coastal town of Kampot.

3. Subject to any views which you or the GOC may have, we would propose a simple and low-key announcement from Saigon that ~~market~~ MARKET ~~time~~/TIME operations were being extended in Cambodian territorial waters up to ~~XXXXXXX~~104 east, relating this action to the necessity of preventing the re-supply of the sanctuaries;/ thus, it is directed solely at NVA/VC seaborne traffic. In turn, it would seem to us appropriate that if called upon for comment GOC could refer to the

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High Command communique of May 5 (Reftel), noting that allied operations are "not only useful to ease pressure on American/SVN forces but also indispensable for removing the enemy from Cambodia."

FYI In order to preserve its posture of neutrality, we assume that GOC would not want to "request" this operation and we also consider it preferable that it not do so. End FYI

4. The appropriate MARKET TIME commanders will, of course, be prepared to establish direct liaison on operational matters with Cambodian commanders in the area. We would be glad to have GOC suggestions with regard to establishing such liaison.

5. Therefore request that you discuss matter along foregoing lines at appropriate level with GOC and inform reactions soonest.

END

ROGERS

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